Panel Name: COMLINC

Question and Answer Session:

Q: Who pays for the "green" box depicted in the graphic on slide #11 and the T1 lines?
A: For the localities that have installed COMLINC it has been funding through a grant. Ultimately, if this is solution that regions choose to go with, they will be responsible for securing the funds to pay for the equipment and leased lines. Local grants could be used to fund this sort of project.

Q: Is this presentation available?
A: The presentation will be on the Virginia Interoperability website http://www.interoperability.publicsafety.virginia.gov/ following the conference.

Q: Who does the Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS) connect you too?
A: You can connect to a State Police dispatcher who will connect you to talk groups at other state level agencies. There are currently 21 state agencies on STARS that localities can interface with using COMLINC.

Q: Who does the "green box" in the diagram represent?
A: The diagram was derived from Motorola's Motobridge solution which is the COMLINC solution being implemented in State Police Division 1. This does not mean that the "green box" will be the same for all jurisdictions as there are other solutions out there that may be used. What we hope to avoid by moving towards a small collection of solutions is the additional staffing needed for additional terminals that may result from localities finding independent solutions.

Q: **Is this a system that you can use to connect to STARS only? Do we have to have COMLINC because it seems there are other patching options?**

A: The reason why we installed COMLINC in Division 1 is because we got a grant to fund it but the main intent of COMLINC is to connect localities that cannot communicate. It is a good way to make disparate systems connect with each other and then connect to STARS, which provides access to 21 other state agencies. Unfortunately, voice over internet protocol (VoIP) solutions are not interoperable. If everyone selects their own solution there would be chaos.

Remember that this is a pilot project. This is not the one and only solution and it may or may not be the statewide solution. There is already CISCO and SyTech RIOS out there and we have to work together to make the systems work together. If we do not pick a coordinated direction or approach, everyone will have different solutions.

Q: **Do you have a slide of the 21 state agencies?**

A: It is on the Interoperability in Virginia website.

Q: **Are you saying STARS will not allow any RF patch interoperability?**

A: No, RF patches are still a possibility. We will know more once the pilot is complete.

Q: **I already have 3 VoIP solutions. Short of supplying the patch to STARS, I can do everything. What is the difference between a connection to Culpeper or a STARS connection to Culpeper? Are we going to be able to use a similar product to reach the goal?**

A: We want to incorporate everything that is already out there. It may be that you already have a solution that will work on a regional basis and simply needs to be interfaced with STARS.

Q: **Can we use solutions other then Motobridge?**

A: Yes. Motobridge was chosen in Division One. We encourage a competitive process and will reach that through the open solicitation process that is currently underway with the joint RFP between Roanoke and Lynchburg. The SIEC ultimately will decide how many solutions are plausible. We need to know for the division of future grant dollars.

Q: **It seems most of the benefit of our using COMLINC is to the state, should the state fund this?**

A: Florida funded this for two (2) years and now they are looking at how to do this without providing all of the support. We are learning from Division One, and we are looking for more solutions. We have to have these conversations to get stakeholder input and encourage folks to become

involved. The decision on where funding will come from has not yet been decided.

Follow-up Comment: We have already spent a lot of money to connect to State Police. Now, are you suggesting that we throw it all away? I believe the state should fund this.

Q: For those that currently use COMLINC will you switch the T1 lines to Variable Bit Rate (VBR) ATM leased lines on our behalf?
A: As soon as we can, we will switch you to the VBR ATM which will greatly lower leased lines costs.

Q: From a budgetary perspective, when will we be responsible for covering our own leased line charges for those that already have COMLINC?
A: Tom Struzzieri is working on that now. We will move you to the cheapest solution as soon as we can. We will be looking at how much we can pool those resources and will be communicating with you soon as to when the year of covered leased line charges ends.

Q: Is the state going to be the contract vehicle?
A: Yes, but it is the localities decision as to which solution they will use.

Q: What does the contract with Northrop Grumman cover?
A: The contract is currently for backbone infrastructure only for primarily 911 operations.

Q: Why not stay on the current VCIN network?
A: My understanding is that we must have a more robust solution. COMLINC has to be on a private managed network other than the Internet.

Q: I am concerned that with the state involved in determining COMLINC solutions that my localities requirements will not be considered.
A: There could be multiple solutions. Unfortunately, we must operate under the assumption that we have only a few COMLINC solutions. We can not give grant funding to a multitude of solutions that ultimately can not interoperate. We have to make sure progress is compatible with the past. However, we anticipate that all vendors will work with localities specifically when they decide to go with this technology to determine and meet their requirements.

Q: COMLINC still presents the footprint problem (i.e., it provides interoperability within a radio footprint, but not for those who travel outside their radio coverage area)
A: We acknowledge that and COMLINC will be a part of our interoperability picture and not the final catch all solution.